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Testimony of Sherri Boyd, Executive Director of The Arc Michigan, on Restraint and Seclusion
in Schools

Good Morning. I am Sherri Boyd, the Executive Director of The Arc Michigan. The Arc Michigan is a statewide disability policy advocacy organization that serves people with disabilities and their families in the state of Michigan.

Michigan has a long history of using seclusion and restraint. Frequently, seclusion is used for non-emergencies and when used in emergencies seclusion lasts long after the emergency has subsided. Using restraint techniques put children at risk for long term trauma and can serve as a reinforcement for the students' problem behavior. These bills set forth promote the safety of children foremost and provide support to meet the needs of educators when there is an absolute emergency.

Please don't be swayed by folks who will tell you that the use of restraint and seclusion provides educational benefit, that students need it or that we can't afford to change our current practices.

The Arc Michigan supports the legislative efforts to decrease and eliminate the use of Restraint and Seclusion in schools. The legislation is way past due and extremely important to the safety and well-being of students with disabilities. We thank you and look forward to joining the other states across the United States that have put limits on the use of these practices.

